



Testimony of  
**Stephen McKeever, First Vice President**  
**AFT Connecticut, AFL-CIO**

Higher Education & Employment Advancement Committee  
March 19, 2013

***HB 6292 An Act Concerning Teacher Education Programs***

Good afternoon Senator Bye, Representative Willis and members of the Higher Education & Employment Advancement Committee. My name is Steve McKeever and I am First Vice President of AFT Connecticut, a diverse state federation of nearly 29,000 public and private sector employees including state employees, nurses, healthcare workers, higher education staff, teachers and other school personnel. I am writing in support of HB 6292.

As you know, educating children is more than just teaching how to read and write. As teachers, we are charged with educating the “whole child”. This includes social and emotional development. On a daily basis, teachers find themselves helping children deal with emotions ranging from the very excited, to the most depressed. In most cases, this is normal emotional development. In some cases it becomes troublesome for the child and the teacher is responsible for referring the child for further help. Giving teacher candidates a better understanding of normal social and emotional development and the warning signs for problems is an appropriate addition to teacher preparation programs.

The social and emotional well-being of a child is not the sole responsibility of the teacher or even the school, but the more we know about how children develop emotions the more we can intervene when something is amiss, therefore increasing the likelihood our children grow up healthy.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.